



SUPERNATURAL

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GENEVIEVE CORTSE
talks about
RUBY!



**Jared and Jensen on
HEAVEN vs. HELL...**

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Designing Supernatural!

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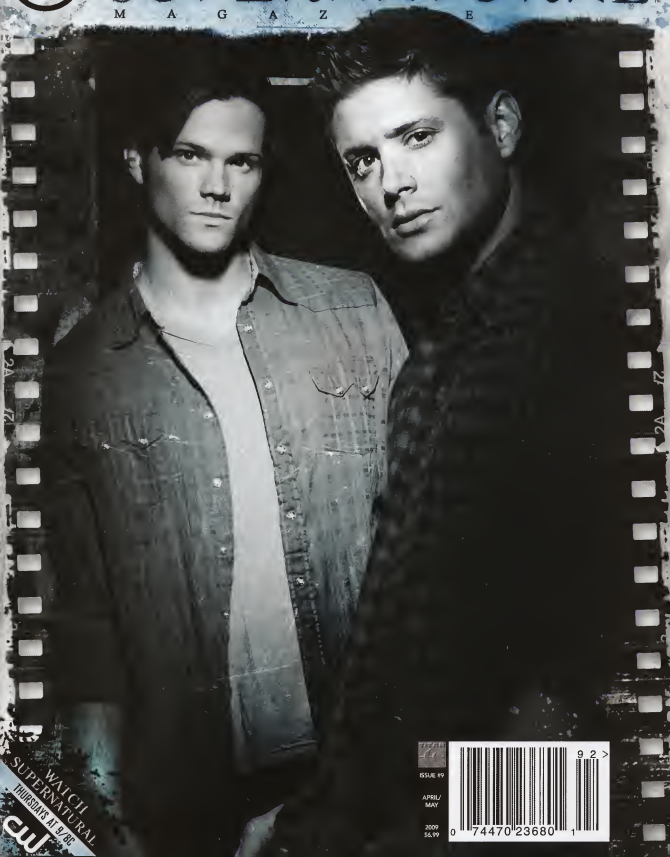
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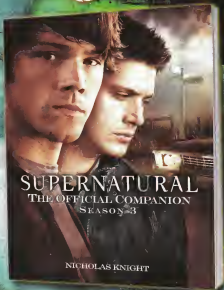


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**O BROTHER
WHERE ART THOU?**

AND DEAN: A ONE, OR AS SORT OF TWO COGS THAT WORK TOGETHER."
- SERA GAMBLE

From what we've seen so far, season four has seen Sam and Dean at odds about their methods, as well as the information each has kept from the other. But is the mythos of *'Supernatural'* favoring one over the other?

Answering last questions on the television web site *BuddyTV.com*, head writer and supervising producer Sera Gamble responded to concerns that Dean might have overshadowed Sam in season four in some fans' minds: "You know, when I'm sitting down to break an episode of the story, I think of [Sam and Dean] as a unit, or as sort of two cogs that work together. I think we really see them that way; we see them as two components of a greater story at all times. That said, I think especially because the angels have been such a flashy and successful new element of the storyline, and they appear at times to be so much more connected to Dean -- that might kind of magnify his light in season four a little bit," Gamble told *BuddyTV's* John Kuback.

"It's hard for me to put myself in this mindset," she continued, "because I've written so much material for Sam lately. I guess the best way that I can answer that question is to say that there is a serious arc for Sam in the second half of the season; we have an end point that we're headed towards. And it's serious. It's fully substantial and it's something that we've built into the first half. We had to deal with Dean coming out of Hell in the first several episodes, that's true. So, there's a shift," Gamble explained that appearances can be deceptive, saying, "I think Sam's way of dealing with things becomes more and more internal, and he talks less about stuff as time goes on. It's interesting to write him that way because he says less, but I don't consider that to be the same thing as disappearing from the script. I think, especially if you watch Jared's performance, it's interesting to see how much he's staying in the scenes where ostensibly the focus might be on another character who's saying more. There's a Sam story going on as well."

The full interview with Gamble can be found at www.buddytv.com.

KIM MANNERS

IN MEMORIAM

It was with great sadness that we at *The Official Supernatural Magazine* heard as we went to press of the death of *Supernatural* director and executive producer Kim Manners, who passed away on January 25, 2009 from complications caused by lung cancer.

Supernatural creator Eric Kripke summed up the feelings of the series cast and crew in a statement saying, "Everyone at *Supernatural* is walking around in a daze, shocked and absolutely devastated. Kim was a brilliant director; more than that, he was a mentor and friend. He was one of the patriarchs of the family and we miss him desperately. He gave so much to *Supernatural*, and everything we do on the show, now and forever, is in memory of him."

Actor Jim Beaver, who'd worked with the director many times while playing Bobby Singer on *Supernatural*, said on his official MySpace page, "Jim is in mourning for one of the best friends and best directors I've ever known -- Kim Manners."

Starting his directing career back in the 1970s with the classic *Charlie's Angels*, Manners was a highly respected and prolific director, perhaps best known before *Supernatural* for directing many episodes of the global smash hit *The X-Files*. He worked on *Supernatural* since the start of season one, directing many of its best-loved episodes, including *Hurt*, *Houses Of The Holy*, *Mystery Spot*, *No Rest For The Wicked*, and *Lazarus Rising*. We know he'll be greatly missed not only by the cast and crew, but also every *Supernatural* fan. Our thoughts and sympathies go out to his family and friends.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE #9

BRONZE

Bronze is an alloy of copper and tin (though originally it contained the toxic arsenic instead of tin). One of the most important metals invented by man, bronze was particularly connected with Ancient Greece, and was often used to make armor or weapons. In *Supernatural*, of course, it was used to make the dagger that Bobby killed the Siren with. The use of bronze to kill monsters has its precedents in Greek mythology, as the hero Perseus used a polished bronze shield to avoid being turned to stone by the gorgon Medusa's stare. Sirens themselves originated from Greek myths, in which they tried unsuccessfully to lure the heroes Odysseus and Jason and his Argonauts to their deaths. The Siren the Winchester brothers encountered was just as unsuccessful in the end.

SEEN THEM BEFORE...?

THIS ISSUE: TODD STASHWICK

Memorable *Supernatural* guest stars hunted down...

Though you recognized the "Disco" form of the shaggy-haired in anson-kur's *Monster Movie*? It wouldn't be surprising, as actor Todd Stashwick has an extensive resume of television roles under his belt. As well as recent roles in shows like *The Mentalist*, *Remember*, *The Secret Circle*, *Charmed*, *Ghost Whisperer*, *Psych*, *Burn Notice*, and *The Middle*, he also had a recurring role in drama *The Riches*. Playing supernatural creatures wasn't new to Todd, as before *Supernatural* he'd played a Voodoo Demon in an episode of *Angel* and a McFadden's Quip in an episode

NEWS



The recent *Supernatural* convention in Birmingham, UK, from May 28-31 has added a very special guest to its line-up - Jensen Ackles' Jensen will join Mahe Collins (Castiel), Samantha Smith (Mary Winchester), Amy Gumenick (Young Mary Winchester), Matt Cohen (Young John Winchester), Alexa Teli (Jo Harvelle), and others! You can find out more at www.rogueevent.co.uk/atlantis/



Proof positive that *Supernatural*'s season four is taking up the show's critical and popular momentum even further, it made *TV Guide*'s prestigious end-of-year Best Shows of 2008 list, which commented, "Angels and demons. Breaking-hot stars. And a wicked sense of humor. Just a few of the reasons the one has TV's most obsessive fans." Obsessive? Us? Okay, they may have a point there.



Praise comes too from the Chicago Tribune's "The Watcher" columnist Maurine Ryan, who is a long-time supporter of the series. She named *Supernatural* one of her Best Shows of 2008, for "picking really thick, dude-butto humor and solid storytelling into each episode." http://www.tribune.com/entertainment_tv/2008/12/last-but-not-least/



We know *Supernatural*'s episode titles often have a story behind them, and season four's titles have been more off-the-wall than most. It's certainly paid off, however, as the New York Post's PopWrap blog has singled out the series for praise, saying it has TV's Best Titles, with particular praise going to *Crisis Angel* & *A Douchebag*. Find out what they had to say on their blog at http://blogs.nypost.com/popwrap/archives/2008/12/supernatural_has.html

BITES

TOP FIVE

... MONSTER KILLS!

Sam and Dean have taken on more than their fair share of demons, ghosts, and other unsavory monsters, but which have been their most impressive take-downs so far?

Sam works his demon magic (201 *Lucifer Rising*)
No one could say the Winchester's obscure-killing techniques aren't varied, but Sam exorcising a demon purely by using his psychic powers really was impressive. Sam formed a lot while Dean was in hell, and proved it by taking down the vampire-possessing demon by pushing it out of its host. Castiel and Uziel would most certainly not approve.



One for Mom (202 *All Hell Breaks Loose Part 2*)
One of the most emotionally satisfying kills for Sam and Dean had to be that of the 'Yellow-Eyed Demon.' For two seasons we'd seen the brothers on the tail of the demon who'd killed their mom, Jess, and indirectly dad John — and (temporarily) Sam, too. When Dean finally got the drop on it, 'Yellow Eyes' with the Colt, it was a case of just desserts for the demon.

Sam the vampire slayer (307 *Fresh Blood*)
Fennigade hunter Gordon Walker had been a thorn in the Winchester's sides for a while, whether it was in his cruelty toward/without vampires like Lorian, his kidnapping of Dean, or later, whether he'd turned into a vampire himself. When Gordon started sucking people into vampires as well, however, Sam had to take action, using a length of wire and a lot of strength to behold the former hunter. Now that's how you kill a vampire!

Merry Christmas (306 *A Very Supernatural Christmas*)
Tied to chains in two pagan gods (the Carigens') kitchen, and having their fingernails pulled out, it seemed Sam and Dean would need to improvise. The brothers needed slabs of reemgreen wood to stab the gods with, so it was lucky for them it was the holidays and that the couple was stocking for a well-timed Christmas tree. Perhaps, for their sake, the Carigens should have opted for an artificial tree!

Dean to the rescue (102 *Devil's Trapp*)
If the Yellow-Eyed Demon's was difficult to kill, his "children" were no picnic to deal with either. When Sam was jumped and beaten mercilessly by the demon's son Ben, it was his big brother who came to the rescue in the nick of time, dropping Ben with a well-aimed bullet from the demon-killing Colt. It was the "rescue" of this shot, too, that helped tip them off later that their dad was being possessed by the Yellow-Eyed Demon.





CLIVED &
JENNIFER

Knockin' Heaven



There have been some shooting, horrifying, amazing, and outright amusing reveals so far in *Supernatural*'s fourth season, but there's one image that Jensen Ackles can't get out of his head: "I think the poster of the fourth season should just be my head coming out of the ground [in the beginning of *Exorcism: Being*]. That's my favorite shot so far," he states.

Overall, Ackles says he's "fascinated about the look of season four, because we did a different treatment with season three. I don't know if people noticed, but season three was a lot brighter than season one and season two. We're back to the original look of what the show was meant to be. It needs to be that way; it works so much better for the story we're telling and for the types of episodes we're shooting. If you ask anyone on the crew, including the lighting people and the camera guys, they'll be in total agreement with me there."

Of course, it's not just the look of the show that's got Ackles fired up about season four: "This has the potential to be our best season," he asserts. "The fact that Dean has now been tied into the whole mythology of the show really throws a baseball into everything that's been building up. I like that, because the show's been building toward this apex for so long and now it's like, 'Wait a minute, there's another apex right next to it.' I think exposing that and tying one of the boys into it makes for a really riveting story this season. I'm excited about that."

***Supernatural* season four has seen some huge developments in the mythology of the series, but what do Jared and Jensen think of it all? *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with them on set to find out...**

On 's Door

Words:
Nicholas Knight

SUPERNATURAL

Ackles is certainly not a selfish actor, but he is an accomplished one, and his skills have continued to grow throughout the course of working on *Supernatural*. "Jensen's really had a solid grasp on Dean since the beginning," notes Jared Padalecki. "He's gotten progressively better and better. To his credit, he was much more aware of who Dean was and much more certain of how he was going to play Dean. From the get-go he was doing a fantastic job."

"When I go back and watch some of the season one and season two episodes, I was still finding myself," Padalecki says. "I was still finding Sam. Luckily, Sam was still finding Sam, too, so it wasn't like, 'What's this guy doing?' There are moments from season one where Sam says [something] that he says the exact opposite [of] in season two. That's the writers and me and Sam kind of figuring it all out."

"I've had many dangers with me," Ackles inserts, "but I think as a performer he's taken ahead of where he started, he's definitely grown." Padalecki agrees. "As an actor playing Sam, I think I've changed and grown. It's so tough to really know, because *Supernatural* is my life nine months out of the year. There's a famous saying in Hollywood: 'The acting's free, they pay you to wait.' Here we are chatting in my trailer, and *Supernatural* is passed on my TV screen. When I'm not filming, I'm still reading scripts, I'm still working on characterization, I'm in Jensen's trailer talking about stuff that's going on here. It's such a happy part of my life, so I feel very comfortable. I'm more aware now of what I need personally to get what I need professionally. I guess it's nothing else the experience that I've gained [working on] *Supernatural* makes me a better actor."



"THIS HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE OUR BEST SEASON. THE FACT THAT DEAN HAS NOW BEEN TIED INTO THE WHOLE MYTHOLOGY OF THE SHOW REALLY THROWS A CURVEBALL..." — JENSEN

His career has already benefited from the skills he's honed on *Supernatural*. "It's funny," Padalecki notes, "because I shot a movie this summer, and a couple [of] times the director or the producer would be like, 'Thank God we got a TV guy!' because I was used to a fast pace, I was used to getting the marks and finding the camera. I'm definitely better at the technical side."



A lot of that comes from working so closely with *Ackles*. "It's just [based on] experience," *Podolske* points out. "We know what we need from each other." *Ackles* agrees. "We know what needs to happen, what it needs to look like in order for it to be done correctly," he explains. "The technical side of knowing if I'm on that side of him, it's not going to work if I mean a certain line, and knowing what side of the camera to not

"THEY DON'T WRITE EPISODES ABOUT US WALKING AROUND IN THE PARK — THEY GIVE US SOME BIG, INTENSE SCENES ABOUT PAST AND FUTURE, REGRET AND BETRAYAL." — JARED

frame on. Staff like that. Does that give you a better performance? Maybe not, but it'll give you less takes in less time. As far as that goes, I've definitely seen it become a little easier for both of us."

With this conscious attention to the technical side of things, does *Ackles* ever consider stepping behind the camera as a director? "Eh," he replies thoughtfully. "I would say that the filmmaking aspect of it is definitely something that I'm interested in. I have ideas about how characters should interact, but as an actor I can't tell another actor how he should perform. As a director, you can. I think that power's kinda cool. Also, when I read scripts now I don't see

the story in live form, I see it through a lens. Seeing it through a lens helps me as an actor because I can bring my performance in. I know that I'm on a 100mm lens, so I can make my performance a little bigger because I'm on a 35mm lens. Just knowing that kind of stuff is interesting to me, and that interest could

easily translate into a directoral type of position, but I think it also helps me as an actor."

Even though *Ackles* doesn't have the power to direct another actor yet, as one of the stars of the show he does have the power to take his opinions to the people in charge. "That actually happened in a recent episode," he confirms. In the recent four episode *In The Beginning*, there's a scene where time-traveling Dean is saying goodbye to his future mother, Mary Campbell, as played by the perfectly cast Amy Gumenick. Although

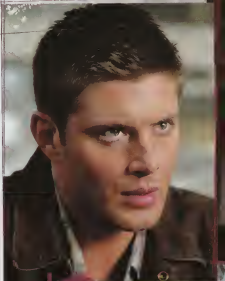
she doesn't know it, Dean is trying to stop her from confronting the Yellow-Eyed Demon on November 2, 1983. He says, "Don't get out of bed. No matter what you see or hear. Please." In the script, Mary takes that as, um, gently then says, "You are strange. Still, there's something about you. Can't put my finger on it..." And that's how the scene ends. "After reading it," *Ackles* confides, "I thought, 'You know I'm gonna be in a place where that just doesn't make sense.' I was having problems with it, so I went to the director, Steve Boyum, and said, 'Am I completely off-base in thinking that? What do you think?' He





was in complete agreement. I talked to the actress about what I had in mind and said, 'It means cutting your last line,' and she agreed. 'Absolutely! I think that that's a better ending for the scene.' Then I thought, 'I'm gonna call Eric Kripke now,' and Eric said, 'Yeah, go for it.' In the final cut, Mary just says, 'Okay,' keeping the scene's tone in line with Dean's mood. "So that [created] kind of a shift in the tone of the scene," Jackson reflects, "but it was the tone that I couldn't get past, so my gut was just telling me that this is how it has to be."

Gun-swinging scenes like that are really hard for Jackson. "The funny stuff and the 'dramedy' stuff we do a great, but the things that stick with me, and I think stick with Jared as well, and really kind of affect us are the heavy, dramatic scenes, mainly because they're the hardest to film," he reveals. "We're two guys from Texas — we don't do 'dramatic' that often, so to force yourself to do that and get that way, it takes a lot out of you. But at the end of the day, it's like, 'Wow, I really put in a hard day's work,' because you're drained emotionally. So anytime Sam's shot or Sam's lying there dead, or I'm barely going to make it, or we're talking about Mom and Dad, or anything like that, those are the scenes I always like. They're really effective."

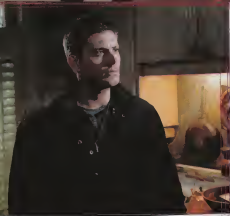


"IT WAS FUNNY TO WATCH [MYSTERY SPOT] AND FUNNY TO READ, BUT SHOOTING IT I HAD TO REFUSE TO SEE THE HUMOR." — JARED

A unique example would be the time Dean — or at least his demonic Doppelgänger — shot himself in *Dean's A Little Deeper O' Me*. "That was a very hard scene for me," Jackson admits. "The scene was difficult because they brought in my stunt double [Todd Scott] to read the other Dean's lines to me — so if I was on stretch as Good Dean, then he'd be opposite me as Bad Dean reading lines. I read the lines with him in my trailer and said, 'This is what I'm thinking,' but

for an actor to completely mirror another actor in about 10 minutes' time is not going to happen... so he was basically just running lines with me. When he was reciting the lines, I would have to think, 'Okay, I'm going to do that line that way so that is how I'm going to react to me saying a line. I had to double and triple check before I responded, before I said any line. I then had





to turn around and do it all over again. The moral shuffle that I had to (pull off) in order to get that scene done was really weird. Then, at the end, I actually took my stunt double and threw him up against the thing and shoved a gun to his neck. Good thing Todd and I go way back, so he's been my stunt double since *Dark Angel*, so I had no problem throwing him around. But to act a scene opposite Todd, I'd never done that before. He's just sitting there, but I'm yelling at him as though he's me, and it was tricky. I was kind of in a weird limbo space during that scene, but then watching it was cool. I thought, "Oh, okay, that worked."

Pedro also finds the gut-wrenching scenes hard to shoot, and cites *Mystery Spot* as a perfect example, since he had to sit out watching his brother die over and over again. "You don't want to do that," he says. "Somebody wants to instinctively fight going there. It was a tough episode to shoot." But at least *Mystery Spot* had some levity to it, so could *Pedro* enjoy the black humor of Dean's various deaths? "Yes and no. Jensen had that scene where he's dying on the pavement and it was November



and freezing outside and he's all shaky with sugar blood, so I was [definitely] laughing after that. I mean, the deaths were hilarious, but it had to be based on reality, otherwise it wouldn't be funny. While shooting it, though, it was tough and to laugh at a plane falling on him, I had to find the depressing truth in that, otherwise the whole gag is done because we're all thinking it's a joke and it takes you out of the moment. It was funny to watch and funny to read, but shooting it I had to refuse to see the humor."

Mystery Spot and Dream A Little Dream Of his screw-up explosions, but rather they're typical examples of the type of emotional drama that the Winchester brothers have to go through in almost every episode of *Supernatural*. "The writers are not going easy on us,"

Padalecki concurs. "They don't write episodes about us walking in the park—they give us steel legs, intense scenes about past and future, regret and betrayal. The difficulty of the work has gotten greater,



because I guess it means the writers trust us to work [on] such heavy stuff."

It seems like as the difficulty of the work rises, so too does the quality of the episodes. "I think this season is

and me, everybody. We all think, 'You know what? This is our show. Let's make our move.' It's make or break for us. If we win, then we double our chip count."

"I remember Eric Kripke said something to me like, 'Listen, man, I'm writing everything I got this season. I've gotta throw it all out there. All the punches I've been pulling, all the tricks in the bag, I'm gonna dump it all on the table.' I said, 'Really?' And he said, 'Yeah.' So then I wondered, 'What about a fifth season?' And he replied, 'I don't know. I'd write about robots.'"

If that happens, Padalecki is ready to go with the flow and hunt some monster robots. "I talked to Eric when we were shooting *A Very Supernatural Christmas*, and he was explaining about where he was going with season three," Padalecki shares. "Where we ended up going with the season was completely different. I think it was partially because of the strike and partially because his mind changed. So what I've learned from that—and a sound bite a double-edged sword, but I really mean it as truly comforting—is that I should just go with the flow, just trust his reason—because it's worked out [very] well so far."

Ackles is too excited about this season to be concerned about the possibility of robots or what will happen in the future. Besides, he trusts Kripke is already working out where to go in season five. "I'm sure Eric's got some twisted, sick ideas kicking around in his head," Ackles says. "If push comes to shove he can pull something out of there, but for now we're working [the deal] to 13 this season!"

"I'M SURE ERIC'S GOT SOME TWISTED, SICK IDEAS KICKING AROUND IN THE BACK OF HIS HEAD..." — JENSEN

a lot greater since season one and even seasons two and three. Like, 'Wow, now I've died and come back and now he's died and come back.' There are secrets and a lot of different levels, and the writers just keep piling it on. It's daunting,

potentially the best of the bunch," Ackles continues. "It's like, 'Alright, let's put all of our chips in and see what happens. We either win big or pack up and hit the door.' I think that's where we're at and we all feel the same way—Eric, Josh, Jared, and







Heavenly Creature

As one of the most dramatic new additions to the *Supernatural* mythology in season four, the angel Castiel has had a great influence on the Winchesters, particularly Dean. Actor Misha Collins spoke to *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about spreading his wings as this divine being...

Words: Jayne Nelson

After one of the most memorable entrances in *Supernatural* history in season four's *Crucius Rising*, the angel Castiel has become a fan favorite. That's largely down to the captivating performance of Misha Collins, who, after playing everything from a terrorist on 24 to a real-life serial killer in the controversial drama *Arka*, brings a sense of grace and contained power to the role. We caught up with him between episodes to find out more about why he thought he was going to be a demon, how parody Lucifer turned, and the wider side of fandom...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: Is it true that you originally auditioned as a demon?

Misha Collins: Yes, it is! The fans of *Supernatural* are very devoted, and Eric [Kripke] was trying to obscure the fact that there was going to be an angel in the

show from the time. He sent out audition material for a demon, which I read through once and then he told me that actually the role was [that of] an angel.

How do you approach playing an angel – it's not your average character, is it?
No, it's not I've played serial killers, assassins... I haven't just played bad guys, but I've never played anything over remotely angelic before! I don't want to bore you with my philosophy of acting, but my philosophy is that humans have some universal qualities, so that when you play a character you're finding that character in yourself, and you harness one of many facets of humanity. When I got the role of an angel, and since he's not actually human, it kind of threw me for a loop! It's not a universal human quality, but Eric gave me some direction, which was really helpful, and so did Phil Gyko, who was the director on the show [for *Are You There, God? It's Me... Dean Winchester*], and their direction was that Castiel's not born

down on planet Earth for 2,000 years, so he hasn't been around human beings in all that time. There's a certain curiosity for him about them. That was really helpful. He seems incredibly old, and has a depth of experience and knowledge that's much greater than humans have. Angels are weird.

You seem to be playing him as though he's got a lot of power, and he's trying to keep it inside.
Yeah, I think so. I think that if you're really powerful, you don't really have to show it. Castiel doesn't have to be bombastic, because there's a clear sense about him that he's powerful, without him being demonstrative about it. But at the same time, from the first episode [of season four, *Crucius Rising*] it's clear that if I'm not careful with my power I can harm people.

You've filmed a lot of scenes with Jensen since you joined the show. You two have a brilliant rapport on screen. Those scenes have been my favorite part. I don't know, there's something about the two characters that they just seem to play really well off of each other. Jensen's a great actor, and the scenes with him are a lot of fun. There's a sort of boiling intensity between the two of them which is so much fun to work with.

We like the way Dean gives Castiel a lot of attitude, but at the same time you get the sense that he's scared of him as well.

Well, Jensen isn't afraid of me as a person in real life, so I enjoy those brief moments where I can [laughs].

Do you ever wonder about the guy whose body Castiel has taken over? Who was he?

That's not something that's been explained to me by the writers, but I have my own theory. The only thing that we know is that the man "prayed for this," so as to the circumstances of my occupying his body, I have no idea what those are. I kind of imagine that he was a terminally ill man, that for some reason his life was coming to an end, and Castiel stopped in at the last moment. He was praying to be possessed by an angel. But that's just me, coming up with a storyline and not wanting it to be true that Castiel would take over somebody [inexistent] body.

The fans went wild when Castiel first appeared. Have you any idea who's been going on with the viewers, or out on the Internet? He's a very popular character! You know, I don't have a base of compassion, really, a lot of people have forwarded me links to things I've seen some of the homophobic ranting and stuff like that [laughs], which is funny—I had no idea stuff like that even existed.

Really?

I had no idea I've never been a big 'fan' of any genre, that's just not me, but yeah, I'm totally [surprised by it.] I don't have a base of comparison, I don't know how fandom has responded to any of the characters. I heard that Castiel got a really good reaction, and I'm glad to be on the fans' good side!

So have you actually been recognized by fans on the street — have people come up and spoken to you?


A little bit. One guy who approached me really didn't like my suit on the show. He really couldn't understand why an angel would be wearing it [laughs]. And if he was wearing it, why he wouldn't change his clothes at any point?

Do people come up to you and say "Hey, where's your wings?"

No, not yet. [Laughs]

Your outfit is a little bit like John Constantine's from the *Hellblazer* comic-book series. Do you know if that was deliberate?

It was in the first script as a parenthetical reference. I think it said something like "It is John Constantine." Eric wanted it, it's not



"CASTIEL DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BOMBASTIC, BECAUSE THERE'S A [CLEAR] SENSE ABOUT HIM THAT HE'S POWERFUL..."

Will Castiel get the chance to look some one over in the season, or are you not allowed to say? [Laughs] We haven't shot much fighting—we had one big fight scene in episode 10 [Heaven And Hell], and I was pretty disappointed! I didn't feel like Castiel was great at fighting. There weren't many lightning bolts or things like that. But I think there will be ample opportunity in the future!

A lot of people would assume that, if you're playing an angel, he'd have fluffy wings and a harp and be a total goody-goody.... Have you come across that? I think, generally speaking, that's what people think when they hear the word "angel." Which is really a modern opinion; historically, angels are really tough and

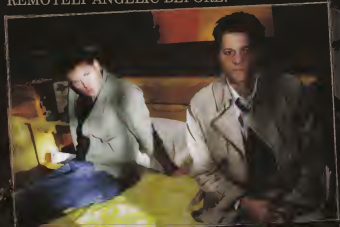
badass. Somewhere along the way they got the fluffy wings and the harps and the perfectly formed cumulus clouds to sit upon, and they lost their edge. But I think that if you look back in the Bible and [other] ancient Christian lore, they're forces to be reckoned with. I think that's the angel prototype that Eric Kripke has been using. It's much more fun! It would be so cool being to be a sweet little angel!

And there is another side, because in it's *The Great Pumpkin*, Sam Winchester we meet the angel Uriel, who's the bad cop to Castiel's good cop. That must be fun to play. Yeah, it is. It's a totally different aspect to the character with Uriel being there. It's nice, because it shows that Castiel's got a softer side.

There have been a few fan theories flying around that Castiel's actually Lucifer in disguise! I don't think that's the case, I really don't! But I don't know where things are going. I think that would be mutually disappointing if it turned out that Eric was pulling the wool over our eyes with a total charade here. I don't think that's what's going on.

Do you even know for sure whether Castiel is good or bad? My gut [feeling] is that he's good, but, you know, I'm not in the writers' room, so I don't know what schemes they're cooking up! But I don't think he's evil. In the last episode we shot [*It's The Great Pumpkin, Sam Winchester*] he has that heart-to-heart with Dean, and I think it's authentic. I don't think he's pulling it on.

**"I'VE PLAYED SERIAL KILLERS, ASSASSINS...
I HAVEN'T JUST PLAYED BAD GUYS, BUT
[I'VE NEVER PLAYED ANYTHING] EVEN
REMOTELY ANGELIC BEFORE!"**



A man with dark hair, wearing a light-colored trench coat over a white shirt, is shown in profile, looking out of a window. The background is a textured, grey stone wall.

IT WOULD BE SO BORING TO BE A SWEET LITTLE ANGEL!"

a nicely tailored Italian suit, it's kind of like a crappy, cheap suit. But it's cool, I like it. I'm glad I get to wear the coat going into the Vancouver winter, and [that] my wardrobe doesn't consist of a tank top and a pair of short shorts!

You've obviously had a very interesting career so far, appearing on shows such as *24* and *ER*. How does *Supernatural* compare with other shows?

I'm trying to think of when I've worked on sets that have been comparably happy [laughing], and in television, I can't think of any. *Supernatural* was the happiest cast and crew I've worked with. Which actually says a lot, because it's probably the most overworked crew I've ever worked with as well. I mean, Jared and Jensen are in almost every scene, so their shooting schedule is incredibly rigorous. They're always cracking jokes, they're always in reasonably good humor, even at five o'clock in the morning. They really work hard. And the crew — I don't know if this is accurate, but this is what I was told last time I was up there — 95 per cent of the crew have been with the show from the beginning, which is unheard of. The show



starts shooting at eight or nine in the morning on the Monday, and by the time you get to Friday it's four o'clock in the morning. But yeah, it's a really nice crew.

Had you worked in Vancouver before?

I went on a long bike ride in Vancouver. I rode the Trans-Canada Trail, which is a trail that goes from the Atlantic to the Pacific across Canada, and I rode about 500 miles of that about two years ago and ended in Vancouver. Then before that I shot an episode of *Seven Days* up in Vancouver.

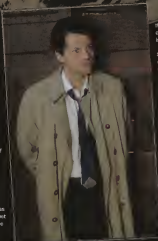
It's quite different to those desert locations of *24*, or fake-Chicago in *ER*...

Although, you know, all of the exteriors of *Supernatural* are supposed to be different places in America, and everywhere that Dean and Sam go seems to be green and mossy.

Speaking of traveling, you seem to have done quite a bit yourself. Is it true that you spent time at a monastery in Tibet? I've done a fair amount of traveling and was at a monastery in Tibet for several months. I learned meditation and Buddhist philosophy along the way, and some Tibetan throat-singing. Which, when I'm warming up, sounds kind of like a goat slaughter, but once you get going, it's an amazing thing where you can produce multiple notes with your voice simultaneously so you're singing a chord.

Is there a lot of call for Tibetan throat-singing in your line of work? You know, I haven't been called on to do it professionally yet, but I know that that call is just around the corner.

We also hear—and you're probably on top of talking about that, particularly since the recent presidential election—but you used to work as an intern at the White House... I did, and I'm not fed up of talking about it.



"I GOT TO BOWL IN PRESIDENT NIXON'S BOWLING SHOES, SO THAT'S PRETTY MUCH AS COOL AS IT GETS!"

Tell us some secrets about the White House that you haven't told any other journalist. We might not be able to print them, but we'll see...

[Laughs] A secret about the White House? Well, the most important piece of information I can share with you about the White House is that there is, in fact, a bowling alley there. I got to bowl in President Nixon's bowling shoes, so that's pretty much as cool as it gets.

That's amazing!

The White House is actually pretty well appointed; there's the Rose Garden out back, the bowling alley in the basement, and they've got the best movie screens

there, too, that's just beautiful. Instead of having basic movie reels, each seat is a Bercoulounge. It's really great!

So far the angels haven't been directly protecting the Winchesters much—Dean's almost been killed several times since Castiel showed up...

I think that the angels are going to get more involved. They obviously feel like the Winchesters can handle themselves, they've done pretty well for a long time.

Yes, they've survived four years so far. And the show's doing so well, isn't it? For a smaller network, ratings are going up...

Small network, and also unusual for that to happen in the fourth season of a show, so it's all good news.

Do you know yet if you'll be appearing in the rest of season four?

I'm gonna be around for the rest of the season, yes. You're the first interviewer that I've shared that with.

Do you think the *Apocalypse* will actually happen in the show? I don't know where they're going to go with it, but from a dramatic standpoint it seems like they tend to go [in a] more dramatic [direction] in the show, and the *Apocalypse* is very dramatic. My money is on the *Apocalypse*. ☺



MYTHS &

Demons

It doesn't matter how you choose to spell their names (exorcism, incubus, daemon, dæmon or even dæmon), most demons are bad news — as the Witches were knew to their cost. They've tangled with so many over the years that you'd be forgiven for thinking that there's a demon lurking around every corner, or in every streetlight...

Demons in one form or another exist in pretty much every religion on the planet — whether they're seen as playful or mischievous, they're an essential part of many belief systems. In Hindu mythology, for example, Rakshasas are demons, other religions include everything from Djinn to devils — all creatures Sam and Dean have tangled with at their time.

Some Christians believe that demons are actually fallen angels who were sent to Hell after challenging God. Their punishment for disobeying the Lord wasn't simply to suffer the tortures of

Hell, but also to be deprived of the sight of God — a massive punishment in and of itself. Only after a significant amount of time had passed were these demons allowed to re-enter the world in any way, such as through the serpent that caused so much harm in the Garden of Eden.

From what we've discovered about demons through Sam and Dean, it seems that many of them (like Ruby for instance) were once humans, but had their humanity slowly stripped from them after being condemned to Hell.

When passing from host to host, demons become a cloud of black smoke, although Dean could see their 'real' faces when he was about to come to the end of his life (they're not pretty). There are several kinds of demon, too — yellow-eyed (Animal), white-eyed (Laird, Samhain, and Maatari), red-eyed (Kissmequick Demons) and black-eyed.



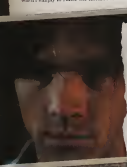
Possession

The idea of demon possession is an ancient one, in the Gospel of Mark, for example, Jesus is said to have 'cast out' demons that were possessing people, and even gave the power to do so to some of his disciples.

Whether somebody is actually possessed or not is a tricky question to answer — the Catholic church has been known to perform exorcisms, but there's also a chance that the victim could simply be suffering from a mental illness or be having seizures because of another condition.

In the world of *Supernatural*, we've seen demons move from host to host (one of them was even a Reaper), and many times the host body doesn't survive the possession after the person is injured in some way while the demon is in control.

In order to protect themselves from being taken over, both Sam and Dean have had a charm tattooed on their skin to keep demons away — shows they never thought of it before May decided to possess Sam that one time.



We'd say you're doing even better than "great?"

Yeah, it's pretty remarkable. In the 18-34 [demographic], we're up 33 per cent, 18-49 we're up 42 per cent. It's enormous. It's a bigger jump than any other show. After three years, I think people have just sort of found us, and I imagine the upward trend will keep going. We're all happy about that.

It's great that *Supernatural* is picking up so many new viewers, but what do the diehard viewers think of season four so far?


The response has overwhelmingly been very positive. The audience seems to love Castiel and that whole mystery. You do these things and you don't know how they're going to be received, and we just sort of make these decisions and say, "Well, what would we like to see? What do we think would be interesting?" And we hope the audience agrees. Sometimes they know and sometimes they haven't—but this year they seem to be really onboard with the story we're telling.

More specifically, what was the fan response like for *Monster Movie*?

The show did well and got a good response. On the blogs and all that it was pretty much universally liked... and they don't spare us when they don't like something!

How did you feel about the guest cast on *Monster Movie*?

Our guest cast was great, especially Todd Stashwick, who played the shape-shifter. We found out when he got up to Vancouver that he was really a devotee of these movies. He brought a wonderful quality to the character, especially Dracula. He found all the comedy beats, and then when he did pathos at the end, he really delivered. Everybody really got into it—they went back 50 years, or however long it's been, and just placed themselves in that acting style. The



ON *SUPERNATURAL*, THINGS ARE NEVER AS SIMPLE AS BLACK AND WHITE—RUBY IS A GOOD DEMON, URIEL IS A VENGEFUL ANGEL—BUT FOR JUST ONE EPISODE, THINGS WERE AS SIMPLE AS VAMPIRES LOOKING LIKE DRACULA, AND EVERYTHING WAS QUITE LITERALLY BLACK AND WHITE. EXECUTIVE PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR ROBERT SINGER TALKS TO THE OFFICIAL *SUPERNATURAL* MAGAZINE ABOUT MAKING *MONSTER MOVIE*... AND OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF SEASON FOUR SO FAR.

SPOTLIGHT ON:

MONSTER MOVIE

DIRECTOR'S CUT:

ROBERT SINGER

Words: Nicholas Knight

The Official Supernatural Magazine: Despite the introduction of angels this season, and all the cool storylines that's led to, the episode that stands out the most in many ways is *Monster Movie*. Were you excited to be the one directing this unique episode? I was thrilled to have gotten this one!

While we'd assume you were already a fan of the classic 34s horror films, did you re-watch them before shooting this episode? I did. Some of them I found really helpful, and others were just kind of creepy—I tried to certainly pay homage to the best of them. I think *Dracula* (the director of *Frankenstein* and *Reels of Frankenstein*) was probably the best. The original *Dracula* had some cool things in it, too. I tried to recreate scenes and the way they were shot and the moves they made and all that, but at the same time I tried to keep it modern. I like to think of *Monster Movie* as an homage, rather than just a shot-by-shot thing.

Did you have to change your directing style to suit this episode? Somewhat. We shot it with more traditional wider angle lenses, and the moves were a little more studied, the way they used to film them. Like when the Wolfman attacks the people in the car, I really wanted to make that feel like an old Wolfman movie. I made a conscious effort to shoot that on our soundstage rather than go out to a practical location. You got that backdrop with the moon and the ground fog and all that, which has a certain surreal quality to it, but I thought it was appropriate for that particular scene.

Likewise, as it was black and white, did you have to approach the lighting of the episode differently? Serge Ladouceur (*Supernatural*'s Director of Photography) and I talked about this quite a bit. It was a harder

light, there wasn't as much soft light as we normally use. The shadows were deeper and we weren't afraid of letting the blacks go really black and putting a harder front light on some of the scenes. Serge likes those movies as well, so it was an easy transition for him. We just had a great time doing it. We'd look at the monitors and giggle about how cool it looked!

Do you think *Supernatural*'s viewers are familiar with these old monster movies? I think some probably are, but I think most aren't. Our feeling was that for those who hadn't seen them, it would be a little bit of an education, and maybe they would then go look at these movies, and for those who had seen them, it would be a fun ride. It worked out well.

Is it true that this episode, which aired fifth, was originally written

and shot to be the third episode of the season?

Yes. That was a network decision, but we didn't argue [about] it. They thought it was a little early for that big a change of pace. I think we had to change one line of dialogue that referred to something, but it was no great hardship for us.

Were you concerned about having too many of the myth arc-heavy episodes in a row at the beginning of the season?

That was a discussion we had. We brought up with them that we normally like to spread these things out a little bit, but they felt pretty strongly that it would help launch the season. They weren't afraid of having that much mythology, which seemed to have worked out well for us. We're doing great this year!



for taking on whatever acting challenges the writers throw at them? Jared feels more in his comfort zone if he's doing heavily dramatic stuff, but I think he's unfettered himself on the comedy. His physical comedy was great in *Dad Day Afternoon*. And in *Monster Movie*, when he goes to rip the ear off the guy who was playing the keyboard and he realizes it's not the disheveled, he does a really funny facial take. Jensen likes to go for the comedy. He's got great comedy chops and terrific timing, so that stuff doesn't scare him at all. I think if the script's got comedy moments in it, he really digs it.

What's your favorite thing about season four so far?

I have to say, when we've taken the mythology. The addition of the angels has been a really good shot in the arm for us. It came to us last year as something to try, and I think we were all a little wary of it. We'd committed to doing it, but we weren't sure what it was. Once we cast Mike Collette [as Castiel] and saw him on film, we said, "Oh, this is really going to be great stuff." I think the best thing about this year is that the mythology is the strongest it's been since year one.

Looking forward to what's coming up, Lilith is trying to free Lucifer to essentially bring about Armageddon — was the countdown in the Apocalypse

always part of the endgame envisaged for *Supernatural*?

No, always.

Will we be seeing Lucifer this season?

Well, I'm afraid I can't tell you. That's a huggie — I can't talk about that.

Will we ever see the "Lord" (i.e. God)?

That I would doubt. I don't think we're going to go that far.

Why aren't the angels in *Supernatural* more merciful and kind in their approach?

Traditionally, angels are warriors of the

Lord. Over time they've become these cherubic things with halos and all that, but that's not biblically what they are. There's lots of writing and things that go on in the Bible by angels, and that's the angel model we're going after [in the show].

Castiel and Uriel are great characters, but the angel that's arguably had the biggest impact on the season, not to mention on Dean's heart, is the fallen angel, Azazel. Will we see more of her?

I suspect we will, yes.

How close will we get to the Apocalypse by the end of season four?

Oh, pretty darn close.

Looking ahead, what can you tell us about what's to come?

There's a couple of really big surprises we have up our sleeve that I don't think anyone's going to see coming. I wouldn't even want to hint beyond that, but I think people are going to go, "What, wow, that's really cool!" I can promise people if they keep watching they'll definitely be surprised! ☺





crew enjoyed doing it, too. It was just a fun time.

You've mentioned before that directing *Bad Day At Black Rock* was the most fun you've had directing *Supernatural*. Would you say directing *Monster Movie* has surpassed that experience?

I think so. For *Bad Day At Black Rock*, to be able to go out and test my comedy chops and see if I could do it was a lot of fun. But this one was probably more special, just because it's so different. I grew up on those movies. I watched them on television and I always thought they were great fun. I think the first director I ever really noticed, when I said, "Wow, look at the director!" was James Whale. Being able to do the big crane shot like James Whale did, and those close-ups that he used to do, and that lighting was great fun for me.

Both of those comedic episodes, as well as *Melissa Maleficarum*, were written by Ben Edlund, as was your second season four episode, *Wishful Thinking*. Is this a coincidence, or did you purposely subdivide yourself to direct Ben's episodes?

Monster Movie I lobbied for, but the

other ones just happened to fall that way. You got into a certain writer-director rotation and it's just the way it falls. Ben and I have become the [funniest Hollywood writing and directing team] L.A. Diamond and Billy Wilder of *Supernatural*.

In *Wishful Thinking* you directed a giant, sentient teddy bear... What was that like?

It was interesting. We actually got a really good costume. Everybody was worried about what the thing was going to look like and how to shoot it, and Eric Kripke was concerned that we shouldn't see too much of the teddy bear. The guy who played the teddy bear was so good; he actually would sync his mouth and

the costume to the things he was saying. That was a really hard day because we were in this cramped house and there was not really enough room to shoot, but once we started working with him, he just lightened the mood.

Were you at all worried that having a talking, drinking, porn-loving teddy bear would be going too far?
I was a little worried, but even people who were doubting that script would work in some ways, said, "That really came together. It worked!" That's the genius of Ben Edlund—he's just really good.

At this point, do you think you could take any seemingly "out-

there" idea and make it work on *Supernatural*?
Eric's phrase is "smoke 'em if you've got 'em." We're out there, but it's fun. I've done a lot of shows, and you're always working within a certain box on any given episode show, you're a little confined to your premise. On this show we can go really far afield. Directors like to do that show because they get to do a different little movie every week and there's no cookie cutter involved.

Would you say Jensen Ackles and Jared Padalecki are well-suited



GOING TO THE ENEMY

How do you get into the bank, the Winchester, that is? When Dean asks Henriksen how he knew he and Sam were in the bank, Henriksen replies, "Go screw yourself, that's how I knew." What a character.



Now the brothers are back at square one: stuck inside the bank with no idea where — or who — the creature is. Sam goes hunting while Dean keeps an eye on the hostages, the phone rings and he answers it. On the other end is FBI Special Agent Victor Barnhouse, who proceeds to tell Dean that he's been hunting the Winchester for weeks. He seems to think that they're some kind of sick Benson and Clyde-style bad-guy duo who were raised by a survivorist father to do bad things. Understandably, Dean is not impressed.

Henriksen tells him they have an hour before he sends in the troops. Hanging up, he turns to the police chief and says he's really looking them in 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, Sam has found a lady in a closet: a woman named Sherrin, who just so happens to be in the vault at the moment. He lets Dean know, and together they lure the shapeshifter out, taking her in

use the dead body. Naturally, rather than fighting or trying to escape (as you'd expect a shapeshifter who's just been mangled to react), Sherrin simply screams and faints at the sight of her double.

The brothers are left with two Sherrins on the floor. Which one is the shapeshifter? Dean leans over the dead Sherrin with a silver knife, but is distracted by the sound of breaking glass — Henriksen's tears are startling the bank. Dead Sherrin suddenly comes back to life and lunges at Dean. Sam gets the real Sherrin out of the way while Dean battles the shapeshifter, who manages to knock him in one side and escape.

SWAT teams are now surging through the building. They find Sherrin and escort her outside, two other men try to take Sam captive, but he fights them off. Elsewhere, Dean is looking for the shapeshifter. She finally attacks him and they have a struggle, during which Dean pulls all the skin on her arm off. He finally pins her against the wall and stabs her with the silver knife. Then Dean notices a SWAT team member standing over him.

Henriksen enters the building, surveying the damage, but there are no Winchester to be found. Furious, he discovers why: the two men Sam overpowered have been stripped of their combat gear. The Winchester have dressed up as SWAT members and simply walked out of there.

Back at the Impala, the boys remove their gear and sit, stunned, staring out of the window. "We are so screwed," says Dean. 

with Sam to let the security guard out so he can get medical attention, Dean finds a dead body stuffed into a ceiling space. It's the man who's currently trying to help the guard — he's the shapeshifter now! Dean goes back to the vault and tries to trick the creature, but it attacks him and escapes. It runs across the bank with Harold chasing it, and the hapless Ronald is hit by sniper fire from the cops outside the building. The shapeshifter gets away again and poor Ronald dies.



Hot 100

MUSIC TO OUR EARS TRACKING THE TRACKS...

- "Rock You Like A Hurricane" - The Scorpions
- "Wingside" - Sly

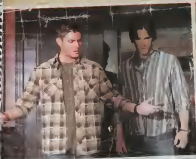
JOHN'S JOURNAL

NIGHTSHIFTER

Words: Jayne Nelson

Episode 2.02

Written by Dan Edlund
 Produced by Phil Smeola
 Guest Starring: GINGER HALEY
 Whitford (Special Agent Victor
 Kershaw), Chris O'Sullivan
 (Ronald Retnoff), George Clooney
 (Sheriff Earl Stone) (Sawyer),
 Stephen E. Miller (Security Guard)



We open on a TV crew standing in front of a bank in Milwaukee — there's a sign in progress, and the building is surrounded by armed police. One of the hostages comes to the door at gunpoint. The camera closes in on the face of the gunman behind him — and it's none other than Dean Winchester!

One day earlier: Sam and Dean are investigating a series of robberies in which ordinary, innocent people have gone on murderous rampages before converting wounds. Their research leads them to interview a man named Ronald Retnoff, whose

friend Dean was one of those unsuspected criminals. Posting on FBI agents, the brothers learn as Ronald spills his theory that the people who have been acting so strangely aren't actually themselves. He thinks that they're part-man, part-machine "windroads." However, after showing the Winchester a security tape of Dean, they spot a less flare in his eyes — he's a shapeshifter! Sam warns Ronald off the case, and he and Dean use Ronald's research to figure out which bank the shapeshifter might hit next.

Disguised as security technicians, the brothers

infiltrate the City Bank of Milwaukee and monitor its security cameras, hoping to catch sight of the shapeshifter's eyes flaring if he's in the building. They do — but just as they're preparing to nab the miscreant, who's masquerading as the bank's manager, who should come charging into the bank but a gun-toting Ronald. "This is not a robbery!" he shouts, and takes everybody hostage so that he can rest as the "windroad" for himself. Now a good development.

Ronald locks his new hostages inside the bank vault with Sam, while Dean attempts to explain what's really going on. Ronald slips on a pile of wet shapeshifter skin and the staff overcomes him that he's not after a windroad after all — unfortunately, it also means that the shapeshifter has changed his appearance. As if things couldn't get any worse, suddenly the power goes out: the police have arrived and the bank's surrounded!

Back in the vault, the bank's security guard appears to be having a heart attack. As the hostages plead

OW, THAT SMARTS!

WINDHEAST WOUNDS AND WOODIES
 Dean gets locked in the vaults by the shapeshifter. Luckily she wasn't wearing heels.



Isn't it ironic that you went from a wholesome ABC family series like *Widows* to something as dark as *Supernatural*?

It's quite ironic, but to be honest with you, behind the scenes on *Widows* wasn't so innocent! On the surface, I come off very cute and wholesome with that ABC Family image, but there are a lot of things about me that are deeper and darker. That's why I really appreciate something like *Supernatural* and the role they gave me. There's so much depth in Ruby. Not only has she been through hell, but there's so much more to her story than that! It's time to be able to make my teeth into something and bring a little more color

Were you well-versed in the world of *Supernatural* before being cast as Ruby?

I knew a little bit about the show. Honestly, I love it, but half the time, I have to turn away! I was at the gym the other night and caught the first 10 minutes of an episode. I'm running on the treadmill, talking at the TV, looking away, tripping over myself, and people were staring at me. It was the episode where the guy cuts the razor blades in the study. It's *The Great Pumpkin, Sam Winchester* and I'm like "Oh, God! Oh, God!" I have a hard time watching it, but I'm aware of the *Supernatural* universe! As for Ruby, I didn't even know I was going to play her until



I pretty much got to Canada. A lot of it I learned from the crew, cast, and writers.

Considering you were the second Ruby, was it a long audition process?

It wasn't a huge process. They were really familiar with my work on *Widows*, which I think propelled me in. For the show, it wasn't the long process it could have been, but it has been a process finding the depth and who Ruby is.

Early on, it was advertised your character would be a waitress and possible love interest for Sam over multiple episodes. What kind of a breakdown of the character did you receive?

The same thing. I thought I was going to be Krusty the waitress. You have to love Eric Espley, because he keeps you on your toes. On *Widows*, my character had a lot of inner strength and there was stunt work. I feel I've proven myself being the lead of a show, but they understood I could handle myself. I had no idea about the grittiness. I would have to bring to Ruby. I pretty much got up there and it was "Time to play!" It's been an amazing experience.

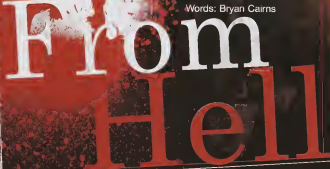
One of the big twists in the season four premiere was Ruby's return. Was that difficult to keep under wraps?

Absolutely. It's still hard for me, because the story continues to grow. I can't tell you how excited I was about episode nine and ten. I'm so excited about the relationships and the work we put into it.

From Ruby's introduction in Sam's hotel room, fans were speculating whether they were intimate with each other. What was your take on that?

In the premiere, I was unsure, because at first I thought I was playing the love interest and then I'm not. Initially I did it a bunch of different ways so that we could maneuver it. It wasn't really until the second episode that it started making a little more sense. In the back of my mind, I always thought Ruby was in love with Sam. If you watch the third season when Ruby is first introduced, the way Katie





Words: Bryan Cairns

From Hell

It's not easy stepping into a role formerly played by someone else, but actress Genevieve Cortese has made quite an impact already as the latest incarnation of the infamous Ruby. She spoke to *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about embodying the demon...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: How did you first get into acting?

Genevieve Cortese: My grandmother introduced me to acting when I was about six years old. She used to take me to the theater, so I have been pretty much doing (this) since the 4th grade. I did a lot of local community plays, and then I went to Tisch (School of the Arts) at NYU (New York University).

What was your first big break?

I got a (part in a) small movie called *Miguel* pretty much the first month out of college. Right afterward, I was on *Will & Grace*, a TV show on the ABC Family

channel. I've been working pretty much non-stop since I got out (of school), but it's been nice.

You gained quite the fanbase from *Will & Grace*. What was that like?

It was great, and I couldn't be more grateful. It was such an adorable show, and to have people respond to it and follow it from the beginning has been really special for me. It allowed me to grow up on a series, as it was my first television show. Getting the lead on it was a lot scary, and to have so many people love it as much as I did was a totally unreal experience. I feel really blessed, and it's nice, too, because (these) fans have followed me over to *Supernatural*.



"THE BOYS MAKE FUN OF ME ALL THE TIME. THEY HAVE A GOOD FOOT ON ME AND ARE REALLY GIANTS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEIR PARENTS FED THEM!"

(Candy) did it was very tough, and she's hard to get close to. If you watch the love of them together, Ruby's very similar to Dean. They're very protective, and I think the whole point of that is to see if Sam can step up to the plate. It's also to protect herself. Is Ruby really to get involved in this and see if Sam can accomplish the task she knows he is capable of? This season it's been very important to bring more of a humanity to it, and I'm sure the fans are going to be upset when they hear that, but she was human and has said that in the last two seasons. As an actress, it's important to look at what that means, what it's like to love someone, to hurt, and be happy. At this point, Sam's proven himself, so whether he fully recognizes her feelings, I don't know, but she's in love

with him. It's also important to know what Ruby has given up to be with him. She can't be in Heaven or Hell, so she has no one. She can't even walk around outside by herself. Sam is the only one she has.

Ruby has always been this enigmatic presence. Is she hanging around because of these emotions then?

I have two theories. One, when she initially went to Hell at the very beginning, I feel there was someone in her life (who Sam) remains her of. That's more of an actor thing I've created on my own. Also, I think Ruby was a lot of potential in Sam. He has something she can nurture. It's almost like a mother bear and her cub (in terms

of how protective she is. In *I Know What You Did Last Summer* I'm teaching him how to exercise a demon and the demon is laughing at Sam. I immediately go up to the demon, I walk him, take the knife, and stab him right in the throat. Sam's all I have, so it's almost like going back, in a weird, messed-up way.

Being a demon, could Ruby be seeking redemption?

Yeah, that's part of it. Obviously, she still has her own hate and rage, but at this point, Ruby's suppressed a lot. For me, the most important thing we've discussed this season is for Ruby to have a redemptive and be more fear-driven, as opposed to (being). "I'm gonna kick the crap out of everyone!"-driven.



Dean has never been a big supporter of Ruby. Do you feel he's warmed up to her at all?

Yes, there's a little scene where he finally says thank you in his own way [Dean and Ruby] are kind of similar, where they filter out the bad around them. If something doesn't feel right, they're quick to get rid of it. Perhaps that's why there's some friction. This season, Ruby's constantly proving to Dean that she's okay and that she's not going to sell them out. Whether or not I do, I don't know yet. Maybe this is all manipulative. The Winchester boys are a *perfect* deal, though.

Ruby's gotten violent with Dean before, and she's definitely a scrapper. Have you had the opportunity to really cut loose yet? I did, which was nice, because I have a lot of experience in stunt work from *Wristle*. I'm really athletic, so it's a blessing [that] I've gotten to do that. In episode nine, there's a good fight sequence where Sam wants to go straight to death and go get Lila. I'm like "No, stop! You're not ready!" He goes off whether I like it or not and then I show up at the scene. It's chaotic and I got to kick some ass, which was really fun!

Lila essentially killed Ruby in last year's finale. Were you eager to exact some revenge? Hell yeah, of course! I want to beat this crap out of her. If you look at that finale

last year and the way Ruby plays it, it's like, "I would come wish that upon anyone" when Lila reads "Dean to Hell." There's an immense sense of guilt.

I hope you're not kicking around some little Lila girl, though! [Laughs] As much as on this show is, I don't think that would be appropriate! I'm probably the same tonight as the Lila girl, and the boys make fun of me all the time. They have a good fist on me and are really gentle. I don't know what their parents did there!

As a director, Ruby has every right to be scared of the angels. Have they had much interaction? [Until I Know What You Did Last Summer], she's stayed clear and never met one of them. There's a scene where I basically have to get myself up to the demon Alastair to save the boys. He just tortures the crap out of me and rips me to shreds. It's like "Okay, I'll do it!" but if it were an angel, I'd be gone. For Ruby, the thought of losing Sam is way worse than dying herself.

How was it filming those torture scenes with Alastair? They were unbelievably intense. I'd never experienced that before. Having

my arms bound to a metal chair, pretty much naked and completely vulnerable, was pretty scary. On top of it, to have my own knife used against me was horrific. It was incredibly grotesque and frightening. You have a little bit shaken, but it's really important for people to see what Ruby's willing to do to save them. You're not even sure whether she's going to make it or not.

The show recently tackled the history of the body Ruby now inhabits. What were your thoughts on that development, and did it help you understand Ruby more? She did it for Sam. Ruby went through a couple of bodies and Sam was like, "What are you doing?" She responded, "I'm here to help you. God, the things I went through for you and you don't even say thank you!" He's like, "Whose body is that?" Obviously there was another Ruby coming around, so Sam's said, "I'm not going to talk to you until you have a different body." Ruby comes back in this body because she was a come patient. As soon as this girl's spirit left the body, Ruby took it over. Technically, there was no one but Ruby in the body so it's ethically okay somehow. She's basically doing everything for Sam.

Did you check out any of the online feedback for your version of Ruby? I did [after] the first episode [*Lonely Street*], because I wanted everyone to like me, but it's not about that. I concluded I have to pay



"I [THINK] RUBY SEES A LOT OF POTENTIAL IN SAM. HE HAS SOMETHING SHE CAN NURTURE. IT'S ALMOST LIKE A MOTHER BEAR AND HER CUB [IN TERMS OF] HOW PROTECTIVE SHE IS."

attention to my job and do it the best way I can. I'm a theater-trained actor, a smart girl, and I've had many discussions with Eric and the producers about Ruby's direction, and we're all on the same page. And hey, I'd get pissed off if any girl went between those two guys. They're gorgeous!

I'm sure you protest when you have to kiss Jared!

I know! I'm going to get married! I have a great sex scene with him [in *I Know What You Did Last Summer*].

For whatever reason, some Supernatural fans really have issues accepting female characters. As I said, I'd hate anyone who got close to [Sam and Dean], too! I want them all to myself! I was warned about the comments, though. Actually, I had a lot of Wildfire fans who were also Supernatural fans, write to me and say "Oh my god! We heard you was on Supernatural! Please don't worry! They're not going to like you!" I was really well aware of it, although I've never experienced it before. I just have to do my job and keep going.

By the end of the episode *Hesher* and *Hell*, do you consider Ruby a friend or foe?

At that point, I'd say she's a friend. Everyone is just incredibly shocked [Sam and Dean] don't choose the angel side, not that she chooses the demon side instead. She's not exactly huge fans of them either. It really makes you think it's not always black and white, or that good always wins. I know I'm gonna



manure that, but one of my favorite quotes is "Be kind to every person you meet, for every soul is engaged in a great battle." It's the same going on here, where everyone is struggling, and there is no right or wrong.

What's it been like working alongside Jared and Jensen?

It's like I was back on Wildfire, where the people were so much fun and we all laughed. It's really nice and comfortable. I couldn't ask for a better group of people.

Have you fallen victim to any of their pranks?


We always try and out-up each other. We make fun of each other a lot. They make fun of me by pretending they can't see me because I'm so short. And anytime Jared takes his shirt off, I pretend I'm throwing up.

How have you handled all the grueling late-night shoots?

It's been good. I like working late, and

I'm more of a night person. I prefer going into the wee hours of the night. When you're really tired, it forces you to suck it up and use every creative juice you have. I really enjoy the challenge.

Do you have any highlights from the series so far?

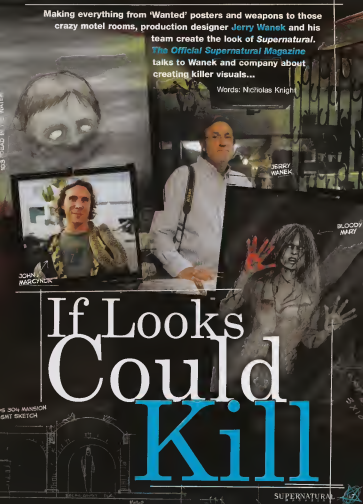
My favorite episode is probably *I Know What You Did Last Summer*, because I really got down and dirty. They really explore Ruby, too. My favorite moment is when I'm in the car with Julie McNiven, who plays Anna. We're in the back seat with Jared and Jensen in the front. I'm huddled over to one side, because I don't want to be close to her. It's an angel and a demon in the back of a car, which is hilarious! 



Making everything from "Wanted" posters and weapons to those crazy motel rooms, production designer **Jerry Wanek** and his team create the look of *Supernatural*. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* talks to Wanek and company about creating killer visuals...

Words: Nicholas Knight

1033 PLEASANT HILL, CALIF.



JOHN WARFIELD

JERRY WANER

BLOODY MARY

THE 304 MANSION
GWT SKETCH

If Looks Could Kill

SUPERNATURAL





In any given episode of *Supernatural*, it's next to impossible to know for certain which scenes were filmed in the studio and which on location. Take the larger-than-life apocalyptic finale of season two, *All Hell Breaks Loose Part 2*. For example: How many of you could tell it wasn't set outdoors, in a real cemetery? We saw them building that set, and we still forget it was filmed in the studio when we first watched the episode. It was that well done, and that's a reflection of the show's high quality production design, as realized by the outstanding art department.

Of course, it would be remiss not to mention the great appropriations made by the locations department, property department, set decorators and painters, construction crew, and greens crew make to the various sets, but almost everything starts with designs that come out of the art department. For a glimpse at the detail that goes into this work, accompanying this article are examples of the art department's creativity, as provided by production designer Jerry Wink, art director John Murrynak, assistant art directors Robert Linder and Lisa Goldwyn, graphic designers Lee Anne Blaschke and Mary-Ann C.T. Lu, and set department coordinator Susan LeVoguer.

One of the goals of a production designer is to give their show an appropriate yet distinct look. "The style that we tried for first and foremost was to be scary," Wink reflects. "All those dark places where people don't want to go - like the classic bogeyman in the closet - and then we extrapolated that to a point where it's no longer safe to even be in the normal house in suburban. We took our monsters out of the shadows and out of the places that were spooky to everybody and went into the safety of your own home. In the fourth season we've expanded our palette to enhance that feeling that no matter where you are, you could be stalked by a ghost, a demon, or some other creature."

It's obvious from watching the show that the art department takes great joy in their work. "The thing that makes *Supernatural* the most fun and the most exciting for



"I run my department much the same way I'm very lucky to have John Maymouk as my art director. I put the may job of coming up with the goofy ideas, and then John makes them precious. John, Mary Ann, Lee Anne, Robert, Liz, Suzie, and [production assistant] Nadine Moser all have input and great sense of humor. I want everybody to be a part of it and be proud of what they're doing, it's always been my way of doing things. I think there are no bad ideas, we just throw [things] out there. We're very open-minded, and I think that's how we keep it fresh."

Probably the most notable result of this artistic freedom is the themed motels that appear in almost every episode. "People are really clued in to our motel dramas," states Ware. "We're in these freakish small towns all the time, and if you travel across North America and you go through these little hamlets, there are always these weird-looking places. You open a motel door and you never know what you're going to find. Everything you could possibly think of finding, we put it in there. I'm a big fan of quirky motels and quirky design anyway, and [around] the second episode we did a motel room where I thought 'I'd pushed it really far, and I kind of sat back and watched the crew and watched Jared and Jensen come into the room... and we not reacted. Nothing I was like, 'Gloag, we're going nuts now, let her here.' In our first season, somebody was trying to get in an overall deal with [the motel chain] Motel 6, so every episode would've had a Motel 6. I said, 'Gyes, you're taking the best out of this. You can't do that. I don't care what you're going to save [financially], it's not going to be worth it, because here's a real opportunity to give you that American kitsch that you can't get in

**"YOU OPEN A MOTEL
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EVERYTHING YOU
COULD POSSIBLY
THINK OF FINDING,
WE PUT IT IN THERE..."**



any other show, and it could be a real trademark." Those legs end up in a motel every episode, sometimes two, so it's a real opportunity for us to give it a sense of place. It's a lot of fun!"

"I love working on the motels," Blumchuk enthuses. "Jerry always gives us cool ideas to go with. For example, in season two we had what we call the trucker motel, and we did the motel/gut portrait (on the partition) and little keyholes of a black motel/gut with the girl on it." Blumchuk says it was one of his favorite motels. "The disco motel (on Promenade) was a lot of fun, too," he adds, "because Paul Sogomonov was directing that, and it was so over the top. When the boys come in, they just stop. Normally they just kind of go about their business, but this one was so far over the top that

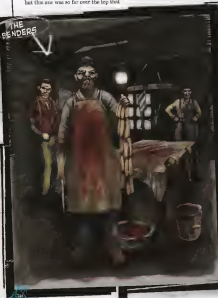
"IN PRETTY MUCH EVERY SINGLE EPISODE SOMETHING I LOVED DESIGNING DOESN'T GET SEEN..."

Phil had them pause. They looked around, taking it all in, then they just shrugged and went about their business."

One of the extra touches that appear in every motel room are the postcards. "We do a different postcard for every motel," Blumchuk confirms. "For example, if we're in a Mexican fishing lodge, on the postcard I'll put a boat shop, cave tours, and a taxiway service. Some of it we get pretty tongue-in-cheek, like when we were in Colorado and we did

something about John Denver and the [song] "Rocky Mountain High." I made the postcard where you have to spot how many John Denvers there are on it. It's just some local flavor stuff we do that adds that [extra] little layer."

Occasionally there are some motel rooms that don't have any noticeable themes, like in *Frank's Blood*. "That motel room was essentially a killing floor for the boys," Marcyuk points out. He was the production designer for season three's first seven episodes while Blumchuk worked on another project, and he's justifiably proud of this room. "I thought it looked great. The motel was way off the beaten path, they might have been the only occupants that night, and it was kind of a cold interrogation scene, so we tried to keep



The Benders

"*The Benders* was an extraordinary episode for us," states Marcyuk. "The house where carnal died was carved up past victims was a very detailed, textured environment. When we designed the cages that held Sean and the others, we used heavy steel strapping, and we had to make that menacing enough because these weren't ghosts or creatures caging them, but human beings who had put our horses in that position."



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2 HEADED
GOAT BKG

"WE TOOK OUR
MONSTERS OUT
OF THE SHADOWS
AND OUT OF THE
PLACES THAT
WERE SPOOKY TO
EVERYBODY AND
WENT INTO THE
SAFETY OF YOUR
OWN HOME..."

SCARECROW



PAINT

SUPERNATURAL





HARVELLE'S BURNED



Harvelle's Roadhouse

"We wanted Harvelle's Roadhouse to look like it'd been there forever," Eliazhuk shares. "So we did layers of photos, postcards, and matchbooks and stuff shoved into the cracks, and we wrote phone numbers on the wall. One of the fun things I did was I wrote postcards to Harvelle's and made actual stamps for them and postmarked them. The hunters would send a postcard like, 'We're having a great time in the Grand Canyon and we're going to snag those vampires.' I also wrote postcards from disgruntled customers who'd come into Harvelle's. 'Your service was appalling. You people are jerks.' Those were on the walls."

it not so friendly. When you walked through it, it definitely felt like a place [where] a murder had been committed. It wouldn't have been the first time a murder had been committed in that room, either. It was the type of place where bad things happen." Whereas in *Bad Day at Black Rock*, he designed the room where Dean leaves Sam alone in what looks like a nice, clean motel, where nothing bad could possibly happen...until it does. "We used the metaphor that Sam's in a bubble about to burst, so we had things like the screen with record details. There were notes on the pillows, the toilet paper folded neatly, the glasses sanitized. Of course, the bubble bursts, fire ensues, and Sam gets caught. That's one of my favorite hotel rooms."

"Another recent thing about *Supernatural*, something that's truly American that people identify with, are the diners," comments Wenzel. As with the postcards in the motel rooms, the graphic designers have fun creating the menu cards for the diner tables. "Eggs Benedict is not in the spellbook," Eliazhuk informs, "so it was trying to replace Benedict with breakfast and bignoni and all those Mexican words, so I made each menu card say something different. The extras who were sitting at the tables got to read menu cards that were really bizarre. We also put people's names on the menus, like 'Bob's Chili.'"

"Americana has a very specific look," notes Eliazhuk. "We always try to deliver that. Jerry is American and knows really well inside and out what rural America looks like. I was talking to some fans who were completely under the assumption *Supernatural* was made in the Midwest U.S., and when they found out it was filmed in Vancouver they were blown away."

"It's to a point of believability where our guest stars will go, 'Wow!'" says Wenzel. "Jared and Jensen have been very complimentary about our taking these sets to the point where they believe they're in a crypt, dungeon, or whatever. That's what we live for."

The one downside to creating such amazingly immersive sets is there's no way everything is going to make it onto film. "In pretty much every single episode something I loved designing

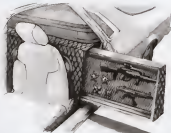
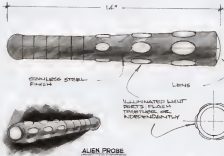


WAS 'MONSTER MOVIE'

Monster Movie

"*Monster Movie* was fun to do," Margulies explains. "I tend to think of my education in the industry as more of an old-school set director—creating things traditionally without digital assistance. This episode permitted us to look at films from the 30s and 40s. Back then they built some fantastic sets and made some bold environments. Our dungeon at the end was an homage to many of the Frankenstein films of that time. Even the credits were thought of in terms of a period look by graphic designer Mary Anne Eu."





GORDON'S WEAPON CACHE

doesn't get seen," Warek reveals. "I think if you're a designer and you don't feel that way, you're probably in the wrong job. I don't watch dishes anymore. I might take a peek, but I won't really look at them because I don't want to go on what you don't see. Early on in my career, I was watching a show that I was really proud of, and it was like, 'Oh, man, they didn't see that' or 'They didn't see that.' I really didn't want

to get into the mindset of 'They're not going to see it anyway, why take it this far?' As soon as you do that, they're going to focus on the corner you didn't finish, and then you're going to feel like a jerk. "Once in my career, my crew and I did this great spaceship for [director] John Woo for the film *Last In Space*. He set up this shot where we went through every inch of the spaceship in one elaborately choreographed steadicam shot, and he did those 360-degree turns [that were] very open-air. It was just beautiful. I said, 'John, thank you so much.' He goes, 'Well, you worked very hard. It is my job to show your work.' It almost brought me to tears. That meant a lot to me as an artist, but that was a different situation - he had the opportunity

to introduce this whole new universe, whereas on our show a lot of times it's what you don't see that is the secret, so we're always going to have dark corners and things in shadows. I accepted that when we started this, but you can't help but be curious about what viewers don't see, especially for the amount of work we put into it and time we spend on it. "We know we have a lot of diorama fans out there that love to see the little stuff," says Klasek. "Even though they may not see the level of detail we put into it, it's there, and our cast and crew know it's there, so it helps get them more into the sense of where we are in an episode. We really try and get the details right - and it's also a lot of fun for us. "Another thing that's a lot of fun for the department is using friends' and co-workers' houses, as well as their own, on

"AMERICANA HAS A VERY SPECIFIC LOOK, AND WE ALWAYS TRY TO DELIVER THAT."



WITCH SKETCH

ARM IN HOLDS
DURING "REPTILIAN"



ROBBER HIGH WALLS
AND ROOF

BARRED ANGLE FOR
RACE
HALF-WOOD PLATFORM

HELBILITY "COTILE" COAR-

everything from business signs to "Wanted" posters. "Absolutely," Elashchuk admits, "we do that everywhere. Really keen-eyed fans probably notice names repeating. I've been a doctor, an author, had my name on certificates and newspaper columns, and most of the things we put names on. I don't like to use my own name for headlines, obituaries, or hospital patient lists, or morgue drawer tags. For me, that's a gna—I don't do that." It's funny because some people love that—they say, "Use my name on the morgue drawer!" I've put friends' names on handouts because they've asked me to!

In season one fans noticed when "The Rip" was used on a car's license plate in *Providence*, and now in season four, the art department has done another memorable shout-out to create Eric Kripke. "On the big metal door to Bobby's parlor room, we stamped in the name of Eric's grandfather's steel company," Wanek reveals. "It's a nice thing for Eric."

Elashchuk loves it when the fans pick up on these elements. "Tell the fans to look for the little stuff," she instructs, "because we're always putting it in there for them. Have fun looking for clues, like in *Bad Day At Black Rock*

we put clues of the rabbit's foot, basically anything to do with rabbits, layered throughout the episode. Always look for the little things, because they're there—we make them in the art department."

"I like some of the little touches such as the 'No Hunting' sign at the beginning of *Freshly Squealed* as Sam and Dean take a break in the Impala," Marczuk notes. "Skittle treey."

"I believe the show stands out as you're flipping through the dial. We're creating some wonderful pieces of art that will exist essentially forever as long as you have DVDs of the show."

Family Remains

John Marczuk discusses what made working on the season four episode *Freshly Squealed* memorable. "Another interesting episode," he remarks. "We ended up building a great deal of the house. There were a lot of [what we call] small 'process' sets: dumbwaiters, basements, overpasses, closets, bedrooms, tunnels, and between-the-real sets. It was intended to be a claustrophobic environment. Essentially, it was to all be in the same house, but we couldn't find a location that would work. We built the bulk of that house over three stages and shot it on a very difficult schedule. There were a few head-banging instances in the sets, as they were only around 4-6 feet high. Full of dirt, dust and dead things. Nasty!"



JOHN MARCZUK



HERO WORSHIP

What's a Supernatural convention like? Well, there's lots of them. Lack of sleep (who needs it)? More lines. Lack of food (who has time to eat)? Even more lines. Running into old friends. In lines. Making new friends. In lines. Moments of teeth-grinding frustration ("Dude, I hate it!") followed by moments of giddy euphoria ("Oh, that's what's at the end of this line?").

Creston Entertainment marked the one-year anniversary of North American Supernatural fan conventions this past November with their Salute to Supernatural in Chicago. While several fan gatherings preceded it, the Chicago convention in 2007 was the first time Jared and Jensen were in attendance at a con together. The one-year mark saw an even larger turnout than the first (between 800 and 1,300 Supernatural fans), evidence that the fandom is alive, well, and on the move.

We arrived at the hotel on Thursday to find everyone already in the Supernatural spirit, including the hotel restaurant, which offered a special Supernatural Menu. Fans were tempted to take a bite of the hot and juicy Jensen Ackles Filet (just made of actual Jensen Ackles, we should point out) or vegetable the Real Dinosaur Protein Fries. (When we talked to married guest James Marsters on Saturday, he confessed to finishing an appropriately large Jared Burger, and the Supernatural Corned Beef Sandwich.) That night we gathered in the bar to

watch the latest episode, which the hotel wisely had playing on every screen. Thirty after all that gorging and cheering? More or less assembled fans found themselves sipping a satisfying Sam-time or Dean-a-Rita, or, of course, an ever-popular Purple Purple.

The convention kicked off with actor Gabriel Byrne, who made psychic kid Andy one of Supernatural's most memorable guest characters. We sat down with him in the "green room" after his audience Q&A to get his thoughts on conventions and meeting fans. The green room (freely actually green) is where the actors hang out between their appearances, have a bite to eat, autograph merch, toss \$200 gloves, and catch up with their fangest customers. Even actors who never appeared in the same episode or season as each other know each other through conventions and the small world that is the TV-business film industry, and our interviews were frequently put on hold for hugs as they greeted each other like old friends. That's one of the most striking things about the convention experience. It brings people together—stars, as well as fans.

"It's a little bit surprising," Gabe told us. "As an actor, you go on auditions, you get the job, you watch it, and that's kind of it. You don't see the fan response. With my first experience I got a little shy and self-conscious about the whole thing. It's so great to see that something you were a part of affected people."

Gabe was also a little shy about driving the Impala, which Dean not so willingly gave to his character Andy. "That car is really prettier—if you notice, I drive away as slowly as I was so nervous!"

In addition to actors, the fandom has adopted its own official musicians, who are now veterans of several conventions. Both Steve Carlson and Jason Mraz have had songs featured in episodes of the show, thanks to Jensen's habit of playing his friends' CDs in his trailer and Eric Kripke's good ear for music. Steve entertained with a concert on Friday night, and Jason on Saturday, with fans happily singing and clapping along. When we caught up with them later, they were both enthusiastic about the Supernatural fans and how much they enjoy meeting them. So much so, in fact, that the last song Jason played, "I Do It For You," was written specifically to thank the fans for their support.

After a Q&A with Steve, it was Richard Speight Jr.'s turn onstage, best-known of course as the wily Truckster. Richard quickly became a new fan favorite, regaling the audience with his encounter with Jared's coffee-stealing dogs, and fielding questions from Gabriel Byrne's adorable young niece. He also revealed he didn't have much sympathy for Jensen filming his fight scene in *Tell Tales*. "He was getting punched by girls in bathrobes. I was not weeping for him."

P

Photo: Greg Schreiber

Jared and Jensen pose for our cover as at this is additional convention photo op. After all, they're big fans of each other, too!

Ever wondered what it's like to go to a *Supernatural* convention, whether as a fan or a star? Wonder no more, as *The Official Supernatural Magazine* takes you behind the scenes at the recent Salute to Supernatural Con in Chicago!

Words: Lynn Zubernis & Kathy Larsen

SUPERNATURAL





Steve's concert was a perfect ending to the Friday leg of the convention. As fans and guests alike headed to the hotel bar afterward, they came across what turned out to be a very Supernatural karaoke session. Fans took turns singing classic rock like AC/DC and Led Zeppelin, Steve Carlson rendered a raucous version of "Feel Like Makin' Love", and Chad Lindberg, aka malleated *Headhouse* genius Ash, closed the evening and the bar with, appropriately enough, "Closing Time."

Samantha Smith, otherwise known as the Winchester boys' mom, Mary, kicked off proceedings on Saturday with her Q&A. One of the first things we found out is that she's a fan of the show herself, though she only watches it in the daytime—it's way too scary for her

"IT'S A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE TO WALK INTO A ROOM WITH THAT MANY PEOPLE AND NOT HAVE TO WIN THEM OVER..."
—SAMANTHA SMITH

otherwise. When we talked to her later on, it was clear she doesn't approve of some of her peers who look down on the medium.

"I love watching TV—some actors are like, 'I don't even have a TV.' How are you supposed to know what you're doing unless you do? I watched *Friends* and *Prayer* to learn how to do sitcoms, and try to see every show at least once so I know the genre and tone when



Samantha Smith (Mary Winchester) certainly won us over.



Ash took the stage—the man sure is tall.

I audition. As a professional, it's [really] my homework."

We also got her take on what we found out is her first Supernatural convention. Sam was blown away by how knowledgeable the fans are, and confesses to being nervous that the fans would quiz her once she admitted to being a fan herself. It turned out she didn't need to worry.

"It's a unique experience to walk into a room with that many people and not have to win them over. They seem very impressed by how interested Mary is. Which is flattering to me, because that's what she's supposed to be. Mary becomes someone in the boys' life as a symbol of good in all the evil they [encounter]. I have this ripple effect, even though I'm not there."

It would seem Samantha had only one regret when it came to the show, in terms of her scenes with her screen husband, the handsome Jeffrey Dean Morgan: "Really, [there was] no kissing" she joked on stage.

This was also the first convention for Charles Malik Whitfield, who played the late Agent Victor Hershfield. When asked if it was daunting to get up on stage to face the fans, Malik's answer was swift and unequivocal.



Charles Malik Whitfield gets that family feeling

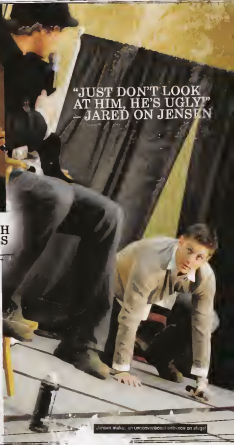
"IT'S KIND OF LIKE HANGING OUT WITH FAMILY." – CHARLES MALIK WHITFIELD

"It's kind of like hanging out with family. Taking on a character, it becomes a very intimate and passionate part of you, and it's a lot of fun to interact with fans and get their perspective on things."

Near the end of the day, we had a chance to grab Chad Landberg, by now a convention veteran since his show debut at the start of season two. Chad was gracious and giving, happy to talk with fans who stopped him in the lobby, and he even donned a pink feather hat for a photo op with one of his most passionate fans, not to mention a grilled trucker cap on stage that his little nephew Devin refused to put on!

Saturday closed out with Jason Maza's concert, and the lucky Gold Ticket holders then headed downstairs for the now traditional Creation concert party with Gabriel, Richard, Chad, Samantha, Malik and Jason. If you've never been to one of these events, they can take a bit of getting used to. Each guest comes to your table to chat for

"JUST DON'T LOOK AT HIM, HE'S UGLY!" – JARED ON JENSEN



Jared makes an uncomfortable entrance on stage



STEPHEN VETRO
OWEN WILSON



Jensen, do "Yes of the figure?"

"THE PROVOCATIVELY NAMED 'J & J SANDWICH' IS A FAVORITE POSE..."

[breathily] two minutes. It's sort of like speed dating with the stars, if you like. This experience can be either awkward or raucous, though it tends toward the latter, with stars and fans sharing obligatory confessions and a couch here. In between chats, fans scooped out the rooms where Jared and Jensen will appear the next morning. Which is the best table? How early in the morning is early enough? How important is sleep anyway? As it turned out, for many sleep wasn't a consideration at all, and "early enough" meant getting in line for breakfast before the dinner party even ended.

That's right. More than a few intrepid people decide to make a night of it. (In an effort to make the all-night waiting no longer necessary, Orton

began a new system of assigning tables for the breakfast when people sign up for their seats for next year - Ed.) They began lining up around midnight, in pajamas and slippers, with pillows and blankets and laptops, watching episodes of *Supernatural* in between cat naps. Chad Lindberg walked by at 1AM, remarking on the long line of people already waiting. A few minutes later he was paged with a video camera to film the live - a wonderful instance of the actors turning the tables on the fans.

The hotel hallway soon became a *Supernatural* slumber party.

Throughout the night people come and went in shifts as each could grab a few hours' sleep. Others stumbled downstairs at 5AM, astonished to see the already long line, by then snaking up the stairs and winding through the lobby. At the head of the line was a multi-generational group from Maryland - two sisters, their mother, and one of her granddaughters. Another fan was celebrating her 18th birthday by sleeping in a hallway, time well spent as far as she was concerned.

Finally at 8:30AM, the doors opened. Cofees of coffee were already on the tables and the bleary fans began stoking up on caffeine, even as they were being jump-started with a jolt of adrenaline - Jared and Jensen would be there soon!

During the post-breakfast lull we waited - staring at the two microphones side by side on the stage (one microphone is set up much taller than the other - part of an ongoing joke about Jared's height) as if somehow staring would make something happen. We watched doors, looking for some telltale sign that they were getting closer to bringing in "the boys" (as everyone calls them). The only calm people in the room were the waiting staff, quietly efficiently going about their business. A person on the other side of the hall clapped and hands whip around. People flinched, checked their cameras, juked up and then dropped threads of conversation that were going nowhere. At 10:02AM precisely a table somewhere off in the corner began a muted stamping of feet and



Jared faces the horde of fans!

drinking of glasses. You get the feeling we'd all be holding up lighters soon. And then it stopped.

Several large security guards made their very large presence felt. Adam Mark, the founder of Creation Entertainment, took the stage and teased us all by not bringing Jared and Jensen on yet. Instead, he teased out where people were from: Australia, Singapore, Japan, Israel, Sweden, Germany, Great Britain, Canada — we came from all over the world just to be there, in that moment. Then — finally — Jared and Jensen were in and the room and the crowd erupted in applause. Last sleep was forgotten as cameras flashed from all sides. The boys were back in town!

For some people, the con was just a blur after that. They would need to go back to their own pictures to remember what was going on. And there was a lot going on. Breakfast was over for tea soon, and then it was time for photo-ops. The precariously named "J & J Sandwich" is a favorite pose, as fans squeezed in between the boys with ear-to-ear smiles. One woman had

Ask the Webcasters: Jared and Jensen field questions together!



Australian skaters (think *Down Under* cowboy hats) that had journeyed half way around the world, paused through customs in Brisbane, LA, Vancouver, Toronto, and Chicago before reaching Jared and Jensen, who were clearly thrilled with the gifts.

Another fan burst into tears when she saw Jensen, prompting Jared to put his hand over his co-star's face and jokingly advise, "Just don't look at him, he's ugly!" The impromptu humor worked, and soon the fan was wrapped up in two rolls of long Texas arms.

Nerves were also in evidence during the Q&A, with first Jared, then Jensen, and even both of them together taking questions from the fans. Typically for the speaking duo, Jared tried to pass Jensen a microphone that had been up his nose and in his armpit — but Jensen knew better than to take it! One fan walked up to the stage to ask Jared a question and froze, too nervous to speak. After several unsuccessful tries, she gave up and turned to go back to her seat. Before she could get there, Jared happened off the stage to give her a hug, while the audience broke out into a chorus of "Awwwww." In

Jared's accident-prone style, however, his climb back on the stage wasn't quite as graceful! Whose was that stunt double? Meanwhile, Jensen almost pulled a "busting," re-enacting Rick "Eye of the Tiger" Durkin's performance on his leg!

It was all over too soon. Jared and Jensen were on a plane back to Vancouver, and things were quiet, the hall noticeably emptier. Fans curled up on lobby couches to compare photo ops and take group pictures, and crowd selfies were on everyone's faces. The bodyguards were the last to leave. A few fans stopped them in the lobby on their way out to chat, eager for their own bits of behind-the-scenes information. Fans from all over the world reluctantly said goodbye, dutifully screaming of their experience, but taking home so many intangible souvenirs as well. The next day, from across an ocean, one fan blogged online about the con: "I haven't cut the wristband off yet," they reveal. "I guess that means it isn't over."

For more information about upcoming Salute to Supernatural conventions, see the web site www.creationent.com/conlendsch.htm. Look out for our exclusive interviews with some of the actors who appeared at the convention in upcoming issues of the magazine! ☿



Jared Padalecki

The Official Supernatural Magazine...

COMING UP



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Bobby Singer!

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*Cover subject subject to change



Who you gonna call?



Vampire making your life suck? Spirits spooking you? Poltergeist throwing things? Whatever your unexplained phenomena, the Winchester brothers are on hand to help...

Dear Sam and Dean,
Some of the students in my sorority are convinced that if you play certain songs backward you can hear messages from the Devil. They're into all sorts of weirdo rock music and I'm sick of hearing them try. Can you settle the argument once and for all?

Tammy Gamba, Chicago, IL



Sam says: "The greatest you're talking about is called 'backmasking.' Some bands do run g to insert secret messages into their songs, like subliminal messages, and some have been accused of trying to get people to worship Satan, but like many things, it's all subjective. For instance, rumor has it that the Led Zepplin song 'Stairway To Heaven' contains the backward lyrics 'Here's to my sweet Satan,' but if you listen, you'll find it's simply a lot of gibberish."

Dean says: "Here's a salute: what kind of 'words rock' mean' are we talking about here, Tammy? Everybody from The Beatles to AC/DC have been accused of this. You could be discovering some good stuff just because your friends are picking around! Although the songs sound a lot better played forward rather than backward, obviously."

Dear Sam and Dean,
I live in California and we get quite a few quakes. It took me a long time to realize this, but I've come to realize that my cat, Poppy, never eats her breakfast on the days on which the quakes occur. I know that people say animals can sense natural disasters - what do you think?

Shelly, Indianapolis, IN

Sam says: "It could just be a coincidence, but I think your cat knows. It could be a supernatural thing, like animal-related ESP or there could be a scientific explanation to it that we don't know yet. Either way, there are way too many documented cases all around the world of animals acting strangely before earthquakes to ignore the evidence."

Dean says: "And hey, what a great early warning system! Although if you give her fish one morning, and she's in the mood for beef and doesn't eat it, you'll spend the whole day on tomorrow for no reason. That'd be pretty stinky. We've found that animals do have a sense of supernatural events going on around them - they sure don't like the poltergeists, that's for sure. Then again, who does?"



Sam says: "It's hard to tell exactly what's causing your crop circles without stopping by and running our EMT meter over them to check for electric magnetic energy - a sure sign that something supernatural is going on. It's probably just kids having some fun, though. Perhaps you should invest in some night-vision cameras to catch them in the act! Then the changing someone can be handy if you want a witness too. It might also be a good idea to take some photos of the designs, just so you can check they're nothing mystical. You can't be too careful!"



Dean says: "I've always thought that if aliens were gonna visit Earth they'd think of far better things to do than draw pretty patterns in grass. I mean, come on - they'd hit 'Niger' wouldn't they? Or they'd blow the White House to smithereens. Or maybe (if you're so sure) to take some photos of the last sea with Earth girls. Come? Who come?"

Dear Sam and Dean,

I hope you can help us - we're going nuts here! My wife and I own a farm, and our cornfields keep getting ruined by crop circles. Some mornings I'll drive an out and see that these or six were once have sprang up overnight. My wife's convinced they're signs of an imminent alien invasion, but I think she's seen that Red Green movie too many times. All I know is that our crops is getting ruined and the police haven't got enough time to help us track down whoever's doing it. What do you think - supernatural stuff, or criminal vandalism? And what should I do?

Jim, Salina, KS

Sam says: "It's hard to tell exactly what's causing your crop circles without stopping by and running our EMT meter over them to check for electric magnetic energy - a sure sign that something supernatural is going on. It's probably just kids having some fun, though. Perhaps you should invest in some night-vision cameras to catch them in the act! Then the changing someone can be handy if you want a witness too. It might also be a good idea to take some photos of the designs, just so you can check they're nothing mystical. You can't be too careful!"



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